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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/881,222	06/13/2001	Subbarao Surampudi	06816-005003 / CIT 2209-D	8573

20985 7590 05/15/2003  
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EXAMINER

KALAFUT, STEPHEN J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1745

DATE MAILED: 05/15/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/881,222

Applicant(s)

SURAMPUDI ET AL.

Examiner

Stephen J. Kalafut

Art Unit

1745

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18, 22, 23, 25, 27 and 29-33 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 19-21, 24, 26, 28 and 34 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 4. 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_

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Claims 19-21, 24, 26, 28 and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. These claims recite chemical reactions, but without the arrow which separates the reactants from the products within the equation. Also, the formula in claim 19,  $R-CH_3-OH$ , implies that the carbon atom has 5 bonds rather than the normal 4. While the use of a parenthetical formula is permissible, such a formula must be internally consistent.

Claims 1-18, 22, 23, 25, 27 and 29-33 are allowed. The prior art of record does not disclose a fuel cell with a liquid organic fuel, wherein the fuel is substantially free of acid, or the fuel is circulated by a mechanism with surfaces which are not acid-resistant, or where the fuel is an aqueous solution of a methanol derivative, which is understood as not being methanol itself.

Claims 19-21, 24, 26, 28 and 34 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action. These claims also recite the various features of the allowed claims, or depend from allowed claims.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Surampudi *et al.* (US 6,248,460) is the immediate parent of the present application. Applicant's IDS which cites art from the parent case has been reviewed. Some citations were crossed out because they appear in more than one place, to avoid duplication.

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The terminal disclaimer filed on 9/24/02 disclaiming the terminal portion of any patent granted on this application which would extend beyond the expiration date of US Patent No. 5,599,638 has been reviewed and is accepted. The terminal disclaimer has been recorded.

The lengthy specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stephen J. Kalafut whose telephone number is (703) 308-0433. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick J. Ryan can be reached on (703) 308-2383. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

sjk  
May 7, 2003



STEPHEN J. KALAFUT  
ART UNIT 1745  
GROUP 1700